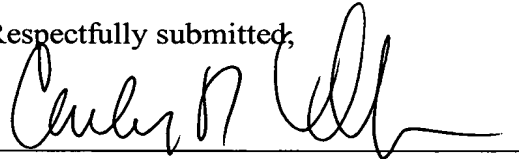


**REMARKS**

The present amendment amends the Specification to recite information regarding related documents, and amends claims 1-25 and 28, and adds new claims 47-49. The present amendment places the claims in the state that the claims were in after the first interview with the Examiner and prior to the amendment after final rejection in the parent case, U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/159,272, filed June 3, 2002.

In view of the foregoing, examination on the merits of claims 1-49 is respectfully requested. If any issue should arise after considering this Preliminary Amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney to expedite the prosecution of this case and/or engage in a joint effort to work out a mutually satisfactory solution.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carlos R. Villamar', is written over a horizontal line.

Carlos R. Villamar  
Registration No. 43,224

Date: **December 1, 2003**

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